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EL7001-8

Dr. Glen Gatin

Principles and Practices of E-Learning

**Assignment #6: e-Portfolio, e-Assessment,
and Quality Assurance**

Comments: My e-Portfolio can be retrieved here by clicking the link provided
<https://sites.google.com/site/michaelhigleyportfolio/>

Faculty Use Only

You have met the main requirement for the activity, Michael. Your ideas are well organized and your writing is clear and concise. Good scholarly approach although you can focus more closely on the theoretical and elements as you did in your wiki. Good use of high quality resources.

Good start on your wiki. Consider using it to display scholarly multimedia responses, video or podcast, for all or part of the remaining assignments. One of my favorite examples of YouTube being used in a scholarly fashion is a [discussion of learning styles theory](#).

Gatin July 30, 2013

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Comment [1]: Willingham, D. (2008). *YouTube - Learning Styles Don't Exist*. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIv9rz2NTUk&feature=related>

Online Learning: Reflecting on the Electronic Portfolio

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Online Learning: Reflecting on the Electronic Portfolio

Introduction

e-Learning as we know it has been around a little over ten years. During this time it has evolved from a poorly received approach to educational instruction to something that is now widely accepted by educational practitioners and institutions around the world (Chapman & Henderson, 2010). “Teaching and learning in the virtual environments are increasingly popular

since the setting offers students accessibility, flexibility, and convenience” (Chapman & Henderson, 2010, p. 16). e-Learning has become a major component of online instructional delivery and has just begun to incorporate e-portfolios to promote knowledge acquisition, facilitate collaboration, and implement authentic assessments online. A review of the literature shows that e-portfolios has a great potential for learning and can be effective assessment tools if used by the ~~right~~ motivated learner (Bolliger & Shepherd, 2010; Wang, 2009).

The purpose of this paper is to discuss and identify the need and benefits of creating an e-portfolio to be used in an online learning environment. The paper will attempt to (a) describe learning opportunities shared between a traditional classroom environment and an online environment, (b) discuss the benefits of portfolios and using them online, and finally (c) the paper will conclude by summarizing the major points.

Learning Environments

Traditional Classroom

In any educational environment there are learning activities and expectations that require students to create, synthesize, explain, and apply the content or skills being taught (Harris, Mishra, & Koehler, 2009). In a traditional classroom setting, evidence of this learning can be observed first hand through peer interaction and classroom discussion. It can also be seen through product-based assignments where students are required to write a paper, create a power point, or complete an exit card, which serve as authentic assessment tools. These learning opportunities offer meaningful interactions in a face-to-face setting and are most commonly referred to as synchronous learning activities (Harris et al., 2009). Learners are able to actively participate in their own, and each other’s learning, giving them the opportunity to interact with their peers, provide peer feedback, and reflect on the status of their learning outcomes.

Synchronous learning activities offer learners and instructors multiple ways of interacting, sharing, and the ability to collaborate and ask questions in real-time, which can improve the quality of interactions, foster learner engagement, and improve learning outcomes (Hastie, Hung, Chen, Kinsuk, 2010).

Online Classroom

In an online classroom many of the learning activities and expectations are similar to those found in a traditional classroom however, unlike a traditional classroom where learning can be observed first hand in a synchronous fashion, in an online environment product based assignments are not immediately available or shared with others. This delay in posting activities is typically referred to as asynchronous interactions. In an online environment student products, or artifacts, are created using information computer technology (ICT) applications (Hastie, et al., 2010). Posting these assignments and sharing them with the teacher and peers are made easy by applications like e-mail and Dropbox but place limitations on learning interactions. The use of portfolios online is one way to overcome this delay and provide online learning environments that can deliver a synchronous and asynchronous approach to learning.

e-Portfolios

An e-portfolio is an electronic online portfolio where students can display and archive project based assignments that demonstrate their learning process and outcomes (Ng, Shroff & Lim, 2013). "Portfolios, in general, were developed to support the learning and teaching process and have been used for a long time..." (Balaban, Mu, & Divjak, 2013, p. 397). Recently, groups such as the American Association of Colleges and Universities and EDUCAUSE have begun identifying the benefits of using e-portfolios in the online classroom environment noting that it has become an extension of the e-learning pedagogy (Blair & Monske, 2009). "Students

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Comment [3]: Synchronous online learning is common. Where participants use real time webconferencing applications and practices.

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Comment [4]: What theories of elearning provide the foundation for these efforts? How have the theories been tested by empirical research? What gaps remain in the research?

construct electronic portfolios for three purposes: 1) learning and professional develop- ment, 2) assessment of student learning and professional development, and 3) employment and job seeking (Wang, 2009).

“Portfolios foster student learning...by supporting complex thinking and creativity required in its construction” (Wang, 2009, p. 58). Web-based e-portfolios have the ability to display projects and information creating professional learning communities where on-going collaboration, learning, and self-reflection can be experienced. Another benefit to maintaining a web-based e-portfolio is that it provides students a space to store several different types of web 2.0 digital applications in its original form.

Conclusion

An asynchronous approach to education requires no immediate interaction, and as a result, students have more time to respond and complete assignments and expectations, which allow for deeper levels of thinking (Blair & Monske, 2009; Hastie, et al., 2010). However, this same lack of immediate and face-to-face (f2f) interaction often results in one-way discourse and therefore, synchronous learning, in a non f2f-learning environment, becomes highly important for students to be successful in an online learning environment.

Utilizing portfolios in an online learning environment can help facilitate the implementation of asynchronous and synchronous interactions. Electronic portfolios can provide students with an online space they control and own. This space highlights and displays their digitally represented artifacts providing the student and teacher with resources, which can be used to authentically assess learning and mastery (Hastie, et al., 2010). e-Portfolios also serve to offer multiple ways of interacting, sharing, and the ability to collaborate and ask questions in real-time, which can improve the quality of student learning outcomes (Blair & Monske, 2009;

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Comment [5]: ..development

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Comment [6]: Great point. It always strikes me as ironic when institutions espouse the notion that learners should take ownership of their learning but then force them to work inside proprietary walled gardens.

Chapman & Henderson, 2010; Harris et al., 2009; Hastie, et al., 2010). I have demonstrated a few ways e-portfolios can be used by creating my own e-portfolio for this assignment at ~~An example of my e-portfolio I've created as part of this assignment can be found here at~~ <https://sites.google.com/site/michaelhigleyportfolio/home>. However, more research and study is needed to identify and pair **theoretical educational practices to the variety of e-portfolio frameworks** available in order to determine its true benefits for collaborative learning and professional development (Bolliger & Shepherd, 2010; Garrison, 2011; Wang, 2009).

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Comment [7]: One of the emerging frameworks is associated with the connectivist paradigm and is referred to as personal learning environments. Wiki, blogs, podcasts etc all play an large role and constitute an lifetime e-portfolio.
See, for example:
Attwell, G. (2007). e-Portfolios--the DNA of the Personal Learning Environment? *Journal of E-learning and Knowledge Society*, 3(2), 39-61.

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